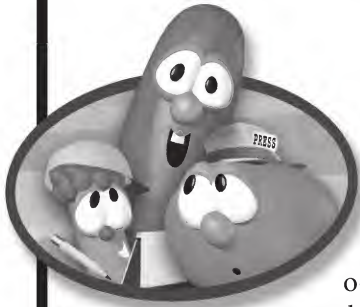


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Undercover Reporters Delayed in Flibber-o-loo



On route to their newest location, the reporters passed between the two feuding towns of Flibber-o-loo and Jiberty-lot. THINK was hit in the head by a flying pot and LINK and ACT took him to a Flibbian hospital where THINK was bandaged up.

ACT took over the controls of the time machine and took them to the real town of

Jerusalem. “We landed at night and found a Pharisee named Nicodemus talking to Jesus,” LINK reports. When ACT interviewed Nicodemus, he said, “Jesus told me I must be born again to enter the kingdom of God. When I asked Jesus how someone could be born twice, he told me it was a spiritual birth he was talking about. I’m amazed by Jesus’ teachings!”

Bob and Larry’s Fabulous Family Fun

In the Dark Turn off the lights and light candles. Read the text from John 3:1–21 aloud as you sit in the darkened room. Talk about how Nicodemus didn’t really want others to know he was meeting with Jesus. Invite family members to tell about a time when they might not have wanted others to know they have a relationship with Jesus. Pray as a family that God’s love will help you be more confident in your relationship with him. Ask God to help you not be afraid of what others think about Jesus and you.

Sock Hunt Game Gather nine socks from your family’s dresser drawers. Print the letters “God Is Love” on separate slips of paper, and place each paper in its own sock. Roll each sock into a ball, then hide the balls in one room. The rest of the family has to find the socks, remove the papers, and figure out what the letters spell.

If you have a big family, make two sets of socks, using a different color sock for each set. Divide the family into two teams, and compete to see who can complete their sentence the fastest.

Afterward, as you pair the socks up to put away, let each person tell of a time when they recognized God’s love.



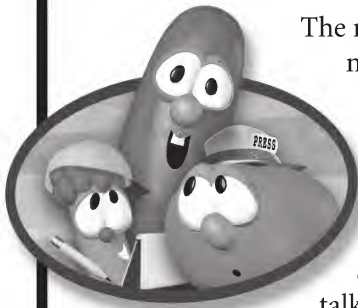
Reporters Learn About a Special Counselor

THINK — LINK — ACT travel in their time machine to the last week of Jesus’ life. His disciples are worried about Jesus’ leaving them, but Jesus gives them news about a special counselor he would send them. Who was that counselor? Find out in the next *VeggieConnections*!

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Undercover Reporters Hear Amazing Promise



The reporters arrived in their time machine during the last week of Jesus' life and ministry. THINK reports the disciples were worried Jesus would leave them. But Jesus promised he would send a Counselor. LINK revealed Jesus was talking about the Holy Spirit of

God, also called the Counselor. The Holy Spirit would help people make God-pleasing choices in their lives.

ACT also reports the Holy Spirit is alive today and lives in the hearts of everyone who believes in Jesus as savior. What better way is there to live than to have a part of God living in us!

Dear Larry Column

Dear Larry,

Sometimes I get an unhappy feeling inside. Like when I'm about to do something wrong, maybe take something from my older sister's room without permission, then I think twice. I start to wonder if God's Spirit is speaking to me. What do you think?

Baffled in Baltimore

Dear Baffled,

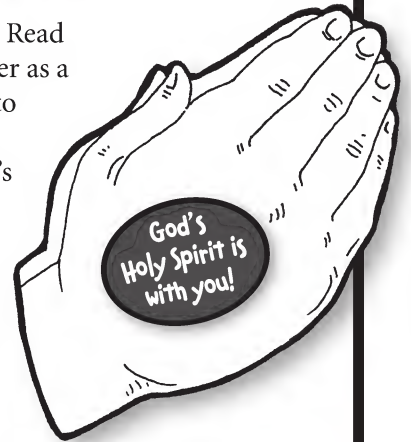
One of the "jobs" of God's Spirit living in you is to help you know right from wrong. And he can also remind you of Jesus' teaching—things you've learned from the Bible. You might sometimes forget to obey, but the Spirit can help you remember! Then it's your choice whether to obey or not. So stop right there and thank God for reminding you to do what's right. Then choose to do the right thing!

Larry the Cucumber

Bob and Larry's Fabulous Family Fun

Holy Spirit Sticker Game

Read John 16:5–15 aloud together as a family. Invite each person to place a sticker on the back of another family member's hand as a reminder that God's Holy Spirit will "stick" with them and never leave them. Challenge one another to look for opportunities to notice the Holy Spirit reminding you of Jesus' teaching, giving you wisdom, or showing you right from wrong. At the end of the week, get together again and share how you each saw the work of God's Spirit in your lives.



Clothespin Word Game

Gather two or three clothespins for each family member. Print the word "Holy Spirit" on one side of each clothespin. Talk together about ways the Spirit can help you. Then on the other side of each clothespin, let each person print a word that describes a way God's Spirit can help them (such as: love, guide, help, remind, strengthen, THINK—LINK—ACT). Have family members attach the clothespin to their clothing to show how the Holy Spirit will be with them wherever they go. To continue the game, let each person take turns removing their clothespins and using each word in a sentence, telling about the Holy Spirit.

Reporters Land on Historic Mountain

The reporters are in a huge crowd to hear Jesus give his famous sermon on the mountain. Jesus is about to begin teaching. Check out the next *VeggieConnections* to hear what the Master says!

“Special Guest for Dinner” Game Plan and prepare for a “special guest” to come for dinner in your home. Have everyone work together to decorate the room as for a party. Use special tableware. Set an extra place setting. When it’s time to begin the meal, announce that the special guest is God’s Holy Spirit.

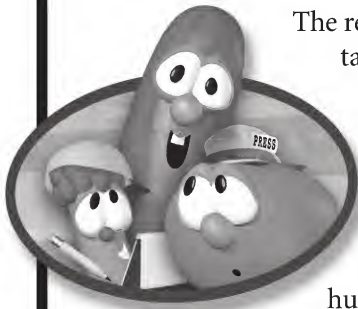
During this special meal, remind everyone that the Holy Spirit is always present in your home. Invite family members to talk about how they are able to THINK—LINK—ACT in love because of the Holy Spirit.



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Undercover Reporters Talk About Jesus' Teachings



The reporters landed on the mountain while crowds gathered around Jesus. THINK reports Jesus began his teachings talking about blessings—a blessing that only comes from God. Jesus talked about being poor in spirit, humble, and

hungering after God, LINK added.

People with pure hearts and who desire peace are also people who will be blessed by God.

ACT reports the last blessings were the hardest of all. Jesus taught people will be blessed by God when they are persecuted or hurt by people who are against God. Jesus said people will treat us just as they treated the prophets of God long ago. Jesus encouraged the people to know that the blessings of God are far better than any happiness we find on earth.

Lost and Found

LOST: Acts of love in our family. If found, please return to any family member. Reward—hugs and smiles.

FOUND: Extra chores done in secret. If they were done by you, please accept our thanks!

Undercover Reporters

The reporters are frantically modifying their time machine so it will float! Why, you ask? Let's just say their next adventure takes place on water, and they want to be close to the action. Check out the next *VeggieConnections* for the very wet report!

Bob and Larry's Fabulous Family Fun

Clothed in Kindness Do you know someone in need of clothing? Is there someone in your church or neighborhood that could use an act of compassion?

Talk to the person or family and explain you want to provide some clothes as an act of love and compassion. Your church pantry may be able to give you names of people in need. Put together a “clothing care package” including shoes. Include a note encouraging that person with God's love, and deliver it with lots of smiles!

Dear Larry Column

Dear Larry:

Our family is having trouble enjoying each other. It seems that we often complain about others at home. What should we do?

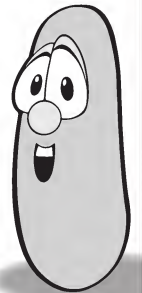
Looking for Love

Dear Looking,

Sounds like you're in a pickle! Try this game to get started. Have everyone in your family sit in a circle. Give each person a colorful note card and a pencil. Have family members take off one shoe. Pass the shoes around the circle as you play or sing a favorite Christian song. When the music stops, each person writes a loving note to the person whose shoe he or she has. Play this game several times to give yourselves lots of chances!

Here are some sentence starters to help you out. You're special to me because . . . I think you are . . . Thank you for . . . How about if sometime we . . . This might help you all to start thinking about each other!

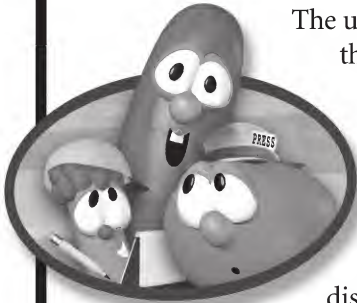
Larry the Cucumber



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Miracle on the Water



The undercover reporters did get their time machine modified and splashed down next to the disciples boat in the middle of the night. THINK reports that Jesus had stayed on the shore to spend a night in prayer. But later that night the disciples thought they saw a ghost walking toward them. To their surprise

it was Jesus, LINK revealed.

And then, Peter asked to join Jesus. When Jesus told Peter to come, Peter jumped out of the boat and was actually walking on the waves, a stunned LINK revealed. ACT got close enough to Peter to see he started worrying about the waves and began to sink. But Jesus reached out to him and brought him to the boat. Jesus then challenged Peter to have faith. ACT said Jesus' words to Peter would be just as true to all of us today. "We all need to have more faith!"

Bob and Larry's Fabulous Family Fun

Local Art Center Involves Families Work together as a family to make a colorful word collage telling about Jesus. Gather several magazines and pairs of scissors. Cut letters to spell the name Jesus. Paste them in the center of a colored piece of paper. Cut words from magazines that describe Jesus. Paste them as a collage around his name. Hang this "work of art" in your home as a reminder that Jesus is your daily source of love.

Jesus

Coupon Insert Cut several coupon-sized pieces of paper from construction paper. Invite each family member to print on a coupon a problem or difficulty they have or are facing. Trade coupons with another family member. Take turns reading the coupons aloud and then helping each other come up with ways to THINK—LINK—ACT to rely on Jesus as your daily source of love.

A girl at school has been teasing me.

I didn't get the promotion I was hoping for.

The roof needs to be repaired.

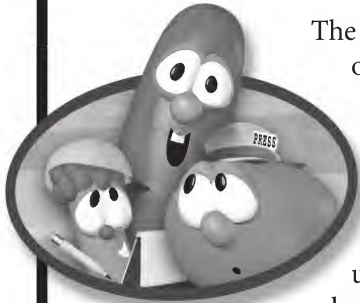
Reporters Repair Leaking Time Machine

Although their time machine did float, it also sprung several leaks that the reporters are repairing. They hope to have it fixed to be able to hear Jesus tell one of his most popular parables. Your next *VeggieConnections* will have the story!

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Undercover Reporters Follow Family Story



The reporters heard Jesus tell one of his most powerful stories. A younger son asks his father for his share of the family money. The son takes the money and wastes it on wild living, THINK reports. LINK caught up with the son at the pig farm, where he was feeding pigs. He was so broke he wanted to eat the pig's food! But the son gets an idea—he can go back home and beg to be a servant in his father's house.

ACT is at the house and notices the father running out to meet his son who has returned home! The father is so excited he puts a robe on his son and orders a big party to celebrate. Everyone is happy except for the older son, who is angry. But the father explains how the younger son was lost and now is found.

THINK explained the reason Jesus told this story was to show our Father's willingness to forgive the lost. There is no limit to God's forgiveness, which is great news for all of us!

Bob and Larry's Fabulous Family Fun

Throw a party! Set up a celebration with special decorations and treats. Take time to share about the times when you've had to forgive each other. Remember that forgiving others is a reason to celebrate. Read the story of the lost son (Luke 15:11-32), and pray together to thank God for his forgiveness.

Make a Work of Art! Work together to make a creative forgiveness poster. Start with a piece of poster board, and add a photo of everyone in your family. In large letters write "Forgive," and think of something to glue over the letters to highlight them—glitter, mini pom-poms, dried beans or pasta, etc. Then let everyone choose different markers or crayons to write in one or two words why they think forgiving is a good idea. Encourage some thought to go into it! Family members may also decorate their words with three-dimensional supplies. Hang the poster where it will remind your family to keep up the forgiving spirit.

Dear Larry Column

Dear Larry,

Last night at the dinner table, my big brother grabbed the mashed potatoes first. He took way more than his share and left barely any for the rest of the family. What should we do?

Hungry and Grumpy

Dear Hungry,

Even when your favorite foods are at stake, you'll have to ask God to help you forgive your brother. Maybe one of your parents could remind him not to be selfish. Keep working to THINK—LINK—ACT in Jesus' loving ways toward your brother. Do something special to show your brother you love him. Then you won't be grumpy any more!

Larry the Cucumber

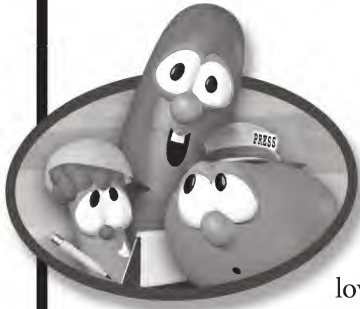
Undercover Reporters Witness Jesus Answering Tough Questions

The reporters get to hear a teacher of the Jewish law try to test Jesus with tough questions. Jesus answers with a famous story that humbles the teacher. Find out about it in the next edition of *VeggieConnections*.

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Undercover Reporters Learn About Neighbors



THINK reports about an expert teacher trying to test Jesus. In reply to Jesus telling the teacher to love God and love his neighbor, the teacher asks Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?"

LINK reports that Jesus told a story of a man who was robbed and left for dead. Two people, a priest and a law teacher, both walked by. But a Samaritan, who was a foreigner who avoided contact with people like the

robbed man, had compassion on the man. He took him to a place where he was cared for and offered to pay for further care.

Jesus then asked the teacher a question, ACT revealed. "Which of the three do you think was a neighbor to the robbed man?" The teacher was humbled when he replied that it was the man who showed mercy. Jesus told the man to "go and do likewise." And Jesus tells us the same!

Bob and Larry's Fabulous Family Fun

Looking for Samaritans There are probably people in your neighborhood or school community who you come in contact with but haven't had a chance to get to know well. Pray together about which family could benefit from becoming friends with you. Then invite them over for a dessert. As you spend time together, think about God's love for you as you work together to show loving kindness to the family.



Play Dough Models Bring out the modeling clay and have some fun playing together. Invite family members to each roll a "rope" with a 1" ball of dough. Have each family member form one link to a chain, using the snake. Link the chains together and let the chain dry. Display the chain as a reminder that your family is linked together through God's love. Use the leftover modeling dough to make replicas of "each other." Display these figures on the kitchen table as a reminder to show love to your closest "neighbors"—one another.

Neighborhood Watch Cut a large house shape from construction paper. As a family list the names of some people you come in contact with on a regular basis but don't get beyond "business," such as neighbors, kids' club and activity leaders, PTO parents, and so on. Write a weekday next to each person's name. For example, Jones—Monday; Baxters—Tuesday, etc. As a family, pray for the assigned family each day and also brainstorm ways you can show God's love to them.

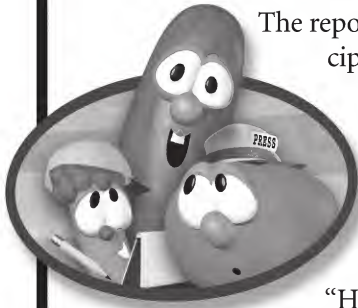
Undercover Reporters Learn Important Message from Jesus

The reporters again return to the last week in Jesus' life. Jesus is teaching his disciples the most important thing they need to know. And it's just as important for us! Find out what it is in next week's *VeggieConnections*!

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Undercover Reporters Learn What Love Means



The reporters heard Jesus teach his disciples the night before he died on the cross. THINK reports that Jesus took this time to remind them of what it means to love him. “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching,” Jesus says with urgency. “He who does not love me will not obey my teaching.”

So simply worded, yet so hard to put into practice, LINK adds. The disciples were worried about this, but Jesus gave them the greatest promise of all—the promise to send his Holy Spirit to remind them of his teaching and help them obey. ACT reported that love without obedience isn’t really love at all.

Bob and Larry’s Fabulous Family Fun

Schedule of Events

Sunday—Plan the Calendar As a family, sit down with a calendar that everyone can use. Review what Jesus said in John 14:23, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching.” Choose one day when everyone can do a service project together. Mark the day on the calendar. Then brainstorm a variety of activities your family can do together to show your love and obedience to Jesus. Some examples include: taking food to a food pantry or supplies to a women’s shelter; spending time with someone who is lonely, making a care package for a missionary, writing encouraging notes to a few people who need them, and so on.

Tuesday—Toss the Laundry Place a laundry basket in the center of the room. Gather an assortment of small laundry items that can be rolled, such as socks and T-shirts. Roll each into a ball. Take turns tossing the laundry into the basket. With each basket made, that person names one way they plan to obey God this week.

Saturday—Make a Chore Chart As a family, work on creating a “chore chart” that includes out-of-the-ordinary chores—specific ways to love and obey God. For example, along with “take out the trash,” include “have a good attitude.” Next to “make the bed,” add “help my sister with one of her chores.” Next to “walk the dog,” write “share my new game with my brother while I’m gone.”



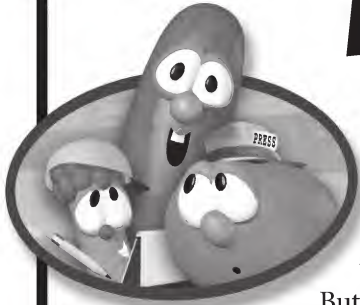
Undercover Reporters Hear Unusual Request

The reporters get involved in a touchy family situation that leaves most of Jesus’ disciples upset. But Jesus shows it’s dangerous to ask for some things. Find out more in the your next VeggieConnections!

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Undercover Reporters in the Middle of Power Struggle



THINK reports James and John Zebedee, along with their mother, approached Jesus with an unusual request: to be given high status with Jesus and his kingdom.

But they were not prepared for Jesus response. LINK revealed Jesus asked them if they could drink Jesus' cup—meaning his death—which they said they could. Jesus told them they would indeed drink the cup, but that only God

would assign places in the kingdom. When the other disciples heard what happened they were upset, so Jesus told all the disciples they must all be servants, just as Jesus would serve even by dying for everyone's sins.

ACT reports that perhaps to prove his point Jesus then went out and healed two blind beggars who begged for him to help. Jesus taught servanthood and lived his life as servant, and we can do nothing better with our lives.

Bob and Larry's Fabulous Family Fun

Serve Outside the Family Brainstorm together to think of a way your family can serve someone outside your home. Write your idea on a piece of white cardboard, glue a craft magnet to it, and hang it on your refrigerator as a reminder. Plan the activity and carry it out as an act of worship to God.

Honor Each Other Each night of the week, choose one family member to celebrate. Try to set aside a certain time each night that everyone can look forward to. Also choose a set amount of time, such as thirty minutes, to make that person feel on top of the world. Make a banner with the chosen person's name on it. For the designated period of time, everyone has to work hard to honor and serve that special person.

Plan Acts of Service Give every family member several "coupons" cut from paper. Have family members write out acts of service that they want to perform for others. Encourage them to think of things that the others would really need or want. Then have everyone present their coupons to the others.

Encourage everyone to use his or her coupons over the next few days. When a family member gives a coupon to another family member, that person is committed to performing the act of service specified on the coupon.

Help dad
clean the
kitchen

Reporters Infiltrate Pharaoh's Court

The THINK — LINK — ACT undercover reporters have somehow managed to get past all of Pharaoh's elite guards and are hiding out inside his palace. They have information about some bizarre happenings when Moses and Aaron confront Pharaoh. Check out the next *VeggieConnections* for all the latest news!